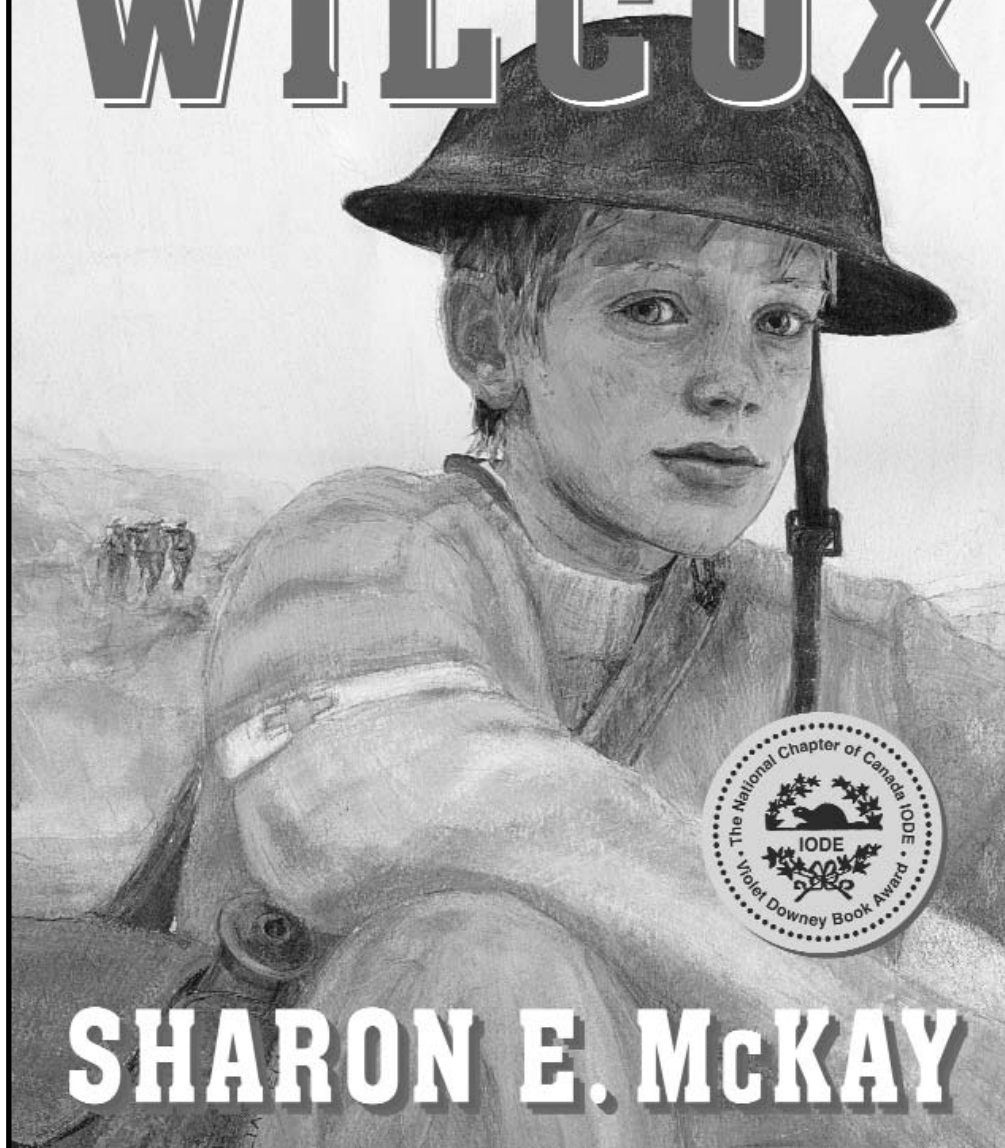


CHARLIE WILCOX



Teacher's Guide

by Beth Alexander



PLOT SUMMARY

Charlie Wilcox is the fictional account of a boy who, looking for adventure, accidentally finds himself on the battlefields of World War One.

The novel begins in the small port town of Brigus, Newfoundland, in 1915. Charlie, thirteen years old and tormented by bullies, is eager to prove himself by going to sea. If he can't sail with his famous father, Skipper Sam, he'll head to the ice and become a sealer like all of the Wilcoxs before him. Nobody—least of all Charlie himself—will ever think he's a coward again.

When Charlie is sent to St. John's for an operation that will correct his club foot, he gets his hopes up—finally he will be strong enough to do real work. Though the hospital is scary and lonely at first, Charlie meets two people who will change his life. Davy, a boy who lost his legs in a streetcar accident, teaches him that humour and perseverance will take him far. And Nurse Mac—a beacon of kindness in the strict hospital—stirs up confusing romantic feelings in Charlie, even after she leaves the hospital with Dr. Daniels to enlist in the Red Cross.

Back home, Charlie discovers that his operation hasn't changed him as much as he had hoped. He overhears his father telling friends that Charlie is “not made for the ice.” Determined to prove everyone wrong, he uses a trip to the city—where his family thinks he's going to university—as a chance to run away. Unfortunately, the fishing vessel he decides to stow away on is actually a ship full of soldiers bound for the war in Europe.

With time to kill in England before his family can send return fare home, Charlie decides to seek out Nurse Mac in the tent-hospital city near Etaples, France. Posing as a Red Cross volunteer, he quickly learns to work hard and help out where he can. Stunned by the hard life and seemingly endless waves of casualties from the front, Charlie matures quickly.

When he eventually finds Nurse Mac, he discovers that she has married Dr. Daniels and is expecting a child. Charlie sacrifices his ticket home so that her baby will be safe, and he heads for the trenches at the front just in time to take part in the Battle of the Somme. Though the soldiers in the Newfoundland Regiment are dedicated and strong, most of them fall that day, and Charlie witnesses the full horror of the battlefield. He has finally been able to prove himself as a brave young man, but it is at a high cost.

HISTORICAL FICTION GENRE

Though the author states that the title character is loosely based on the life of her great-uncle Charlie Wilcox, and though she recounts historical events—most notably, the Battle of the Somme on July 1, 1916—this novel is a work of fiction. Before your students begin to read, discuss the genres of historical and fictional writing with them, and ask how they might be combined in one book. You can revisit this theme at the end of the novel, where the author has included a “Fact or Fiction?” section that details her use of both elements. Ask your students to discuss the real Charlie Wilcox's advice: “Truth is a good thing, but don't let it get in the way of a good story.”

PLANNING STRATEGIES

Charlie Wilcox addresses many themes that will be valuable to examine with students, such as war, heroism, bravery, sacrifice, self-doubt, dreams and aspirations, learning from experience, regret, disappointment, patriotism, love of family, work, humour, and adventure. Allow time to discuss these themes with students, both in the context of the novel and in their own lives.

Charlie Wilcox could be effectively presented as a teacher-read aloud, a large-group novel study, or a novel for use in smaller literature circles. Comprehension questions asked in class, as well as journal responses written by students for homework, will check for understanding and will enhance meaning, personal connection to the novel, and an interest in continued reading. By answering questions, students are encouraged to reflect on their own experiences and to think analytically about the novel.

In a literature-circle format, students should be encouraged to draft and ask their own questions about the book. The teacher should take time to discuss what a “good question” does—generally, good questions encourage discussion; they do not have just yes or no answers. Good questions ask people to predict, to provide opinions, to explain, and to compare. They shine a light on different aspects of the book and get people thinking and talking.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS AND RESPONSE JOURNAL TOPICS

Comprehension questions, response journal topics, and activities for this novel are formulated to develop students’ ability to connect what they read to their own experiences. Personal connections allow students to create meaning as the story develops and bring them into a closer relationship with the story. This connection motivates students and creates a desire to keep reading. It also allows for greater understanding of their own lives and the lives of others. The comprehension questions encourage them to be reflective, insightful, and analytical about what they are reading.

BEFORE READING

PREDICTIONS AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Before they begin to read, have students look at the cover and make predictions about the book. Ask them if they have read anything that might be similar. Read the short synopsis on the back cover and discuss some of the important themes:

NEWFOUNDLAND

- In 1915, Newfoundland was not part of Canada; they had not yet voted to join Confederation. What reasons do you think they had for wanting to stay separate?
- Newfoundlanders have a unique culture and way of speaking; there is evidence of this in the novel. Look at the glossary in the back of the book to get a sense of some of the words used.
- How have Newfoundlanders contributed to Canadian culture? Encourage students to stay away from stereotypes.

Note to teachers: Newfoundland did not join Confederation until 1949, and even then, the decision was met with resistance by many Newfoundlanders (48% voted against it) who felt that they risked losing their unique culture by joining the rest of Canada. In 1915, when the novel is set, people in Newfoundland would identify themselves as Newfoundlanders, not Canadians. As the book progresses, discuss the idea of national identity and pride with students.

SEALING

- What does “bound for the ice” mean?
- Many men in Newfoundland were sealers at this time. What do you think the job of sealing entailed?

Note to teachers: In the novel, Charlie is desperate to prove himself by becoming a sealer like generations of Wilcoxes before him. Though sealing first began as an Aboriginal practice done for survival, it became a commercial enterprise as early as the sixteenth century, when European settlers hunted seals for oil, fur, and leather. By the eighteenth century, ships were built specifically for the purpose of travelling out to where seals and their young (who were easily killed) could be hunted in large numbers. Sealing, though difficult and dangerous (nearly 250 men lost their lives to it in 1914) was an important source of income for many Newfoundlanders, and competition for berths on sealing vessels was stiff. The sealing industry still exists today, despite opposition from animal-rights groups.

WAR

- In 1915, Canada was at war. Why do you think this was?
- Do you know anyone who has fought in a war?

Note to teachers: The novel describes the Battle of the Somme, fought on July 1, 1916, as seen through Charlie's eyes. The author chose this battle for its significance to Newfoundlanders—the Newfoundland Regiment was nearly wiped out over the course of the day. Staged at Beaumont Hamel, France, the battle was intended to bring a swift end to the war by causing a strategic break in the German lines. Despite being well trained for the offensive, the Newfoundland troops were cut down by enemy fire as they crossed the ground that separated the Allied and German trenches. All told, 710 men were killed, wounded, or went missing during the battle—only 68 answered the roll call at the end of the day.

DISABILITY

- What is a club foot”? How would having a club foot affect someone's life?

DREAMS AND ASPIRATIONS

- What types of dreams do people have? What are they willing to do to have those dreams come true?
- Write a journal entry about your dreams and aspirations. Share your entry. (Many students will write about becoming sports heroes, rock stars, etc. Discuss whether “everyday” dreams and goals are just as important as “big” dreams.)

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS, RESPONSE JOURNAL TOPICS, VOCABULARY

CHAPTER ONE

Comprehension Questions:

1. The novel is set in 1915. List some of the details included in the book that help the reader understand what life was like back then.
2. The Wilcoxes live in Newfoundland. Why, then, does Claire say that Charlie is “going to Canada”?
3. Picture the port of Brigus in your head. Use your five senses to imagine it. What adjectives would you use to describe it?
4. Explain why Charlie took his father's spyglass, even though he knew he might get into trouble.

Response Journal Topic:

Would you like to have lived in 1915? List some of the advantages and disadvantages of living almost one hundred years ago. Think of some of the comforts you enjoy today that would not have existed then. What comfort of modern life would you most miss?

Vocabulary: *muddle, fish-wife, smithy, quintals*

CHAPTER TWO

Comprehension Questions:

1. When Charlie tells Emma he's going to Montreal, he claims that he'll get to go to a hockey game and see a moving picture. Why does Charlie make up these details?
2. Think of the character of Claire Guy. What does she look like? What is her personality like? Use evidence from the book to support your description.
3. Clint and Phil torment Charlie as he struggles to get water home from the town trough, even though he is younger and has a disability. In your opinion, why do they enjoy bullying Charlie? Why are they so worried when they bloody his nose?

Response Journal Topic:

Charlie has several options to consider when he has to deal with bullies—he can fight, he can run away, or he can try to ignore them. Describe a time when you had to deal with a bully. What did you do? Why did you decide that this was the best thing to do? Would you do anything different if you encountered that situation again?

Vocabulary: *spry, repertoire, angishore*

CHAPTER THREE

Comprehension Questions:

1. Emma is a maid in the Wilcox house, but dreams of getting married and setting up her own household. What other options in life do you think a girl like Emma has? Why?
2. Charlie's mother scolds him for fighting with Clint and Phil. She says, "Hating is a heavy burden to carry and there's no reward in it." Do you think this is true? Do you predict that Charlie will need to think about this advice many times in the future?
3. Why is Charlie excited about getting his foot operated on?
4. Why won't Charlie's parents discuss the high cost of his operation with him?
5. Charlie is really worried about leaving his father's spyglass on the hill. List the ways he thinks of solving the problem.

Response Journal Topic:

Describe a time that you were in trouble and list the steps you took to get yourself out of it. Did it work? What advice would you give someone else in that situation?

Vocabulary: *lye, sleeveens, berth, valise, linseed, pilgrimage*

CHAPTER FOUR

Comprehension Questions:

1. Taking the train to the city, as Charlie and his mother do, was a pretty rare event for people living in Brigus in 1915. How does Charlie feel about the city? Describe the differences between Brigus and St. John's.
2. Why does Charlie's mother say that war "has nothing to do with us"?
3. In your opinion, why is Miss Northwood so strict? Why does she insist that Charlie's mother leave the hospital so quickly?
4. Charlie is sick with shame when he hits a disabled boy in anger. Compare his reaction to how the bullies reacted when they hurt Charlie. If there is a difference, how can you explain it?

Response Journal Topic:

Have you ever been separated from your family? Write about the experience, including how you felt about it.

Vocabulary: *cookee, bayman, conviction, mishmash, reverberated, orderlies*

CHAPTER FIVE

Comprehension Questions:

1. What qualities does Nurse Mac have that make Charlie like her so much more than the other nurses?
2. Davy is bored with questions about what happened to his legs. He thinks "the only thing worse would be if people stopped asking questions." Explain what he means by this.
3. Charlie has a dream in which his father is floating out to sea and is unreachable. In your opinion, why does Charlie have this dream?
4. Do you think that Davy is going to die? Why does Davy tell Charlie that he's dying?
5. Davy tells Charlie that he has "hyperscholocious halitosis." Look up the word "halitosis" in the dictionary. What do you think Davy is really trying to do?

Response Journal Topics:

Have you ever played a practical joke on anyone? Write about what happened. Did the person feel bad about it afterward? Do you think that it was a positive or a negative experience for the people involved?

Charlie says something to Davy that he regrets. He thinks, "That was the problem with words—once you said them, you couldn't unsay them." Describe an experience where you felt this way yourself.

Vocabulary: *efficient, lippy, shunted, contagious, solarium*

CHAPTER SIX

Comprehension Questions:

1. Davy tells Charlie a number of frightening stories about previous operations that went wrong. Do you think that these stories are true? What does it say about Davy that he tries to scare Charlie?
2. Look up the word *coward* in the dictionary and then explain it in your own words. What does that word mean to Charlie?
3. In your opinion, was it a good idea to sneak out of the hospital? What would you have done in Charlie's place?

4. Compare Charlie's reaction to a scary situation—one like sneaking out of the hospital—to Davy's reaction. How are they the same? Different? What does that tell you about each character?
5. The author included many humorous details in her description of Davy and Charlie's escape from the hospital. In your opinion, which was the funniest?
6. Why do you think the author describes the light coming from Nurse Butters' office in this way?: "A bald, mean light shone out from Nurse Butters' office. It cast long, thin shadows that ended in sharp points." What kind of impression do words like "mean" and "sharp" give you?
7. Nurse Mac describes herself as "resourceful." What does that mean? Are there any other characters in this chapter who could be described that way?
8. Dr. Daniels says, "We must report tomorrow afternoon. I have a fitting, of course." What do you predict that he's referring to?
9. Why does Charlie think he might hate Dr. Daniels?

Response Journal Topics:

Sometimes people look back on upsetting events, but find that they have become funny to them as time has passed. Have you had an experience like that? Write about it.

Vocabulary: *purgatory, triumphant, pivoted, inquisitive, amputated, monumental, skulked, jinker, deductive*

CHAPTER SEVEN

Comprehension Questions:

1. Charlie has a nightmare while he is under anaesthetic. Describe the nightmare and explain why he might have had it. (Here, teachers may wish to discuss the meaning of foreshadowing with students, and decide whether this dream is an example.)
2. When Mac and Dr. Daniels leave the hospital to join the Red Cross, the patients stand and sing "The Ode to Newfoundland." The author writes, "for a moment they were not sick, they were not left behind, they were united Newfoundlanders." What does *patriotism* mean? Does Charlie also feel this pride?
3. Why does Davy give Charlie his drawing of Mac?
4. Why do you think that Charlie is so surprised that Davy is a good artist?
5. How do you think the spyglass was returned to its proper place?

Response Journal Topics:

Charlie regrets talking about Mac and Dr. Daniels, thinking that he's gotten them into trouble. Have you ever said something you regretted? What did you do to make up for it?

Have you ever had to recover from an injury or an operation? What was that experience like? What did you do to pass the time?

Vocabulary: *ether, benevolent, indignation*

CHAPTER EIGHT

Comprehension Questions:

1. Charlie's mother paints a grim picture of the job of sealing. What does she say it's like? Why do you think that Charlie is so desperate to become a sealer in spite of what his mother says?
2. Lucy Wilcox says, "You may be listening, but you're not hearing." What is the difference between "listening" and "hearing" here? Can you think of another saying in this chapter that means something similar?
3. Describe the difference between Claire's idea of kissing and Charlie's idea.
4. What does *stereotype* mean? How have characters in the book stereotyped the Germans (Huns)? Are all stereotypes negative? Can you think of any positive stereotypes that characters in the book have to say about Newfoundlanders?
5. What does Charlie overhear his father saying? Would Charlie's reaction have been different if he had heard the rest of the conversation?
6. What plan do you think Charlie really makes when he agrees to go to St. John's for university? Why do you think the author just hints about the plan, rather than stating it outright?
7. Do you think it would be better for Charlie to go to university or to the ice? Why do you think Charlie makes the decision he does? What word keeps echoing through Charlie's mind?
8. What significance does the spyglass have in this chapter?

Response Journal Topic:

Describe a time when someone you know was "listening but not hearing." What was the outcome?

Have you ever made a decision that disappointed your family or friends? Do you think you did the right thing, even though you disappointed them?

"Figgy duff" is a special recipe in the Wilcox household. Does your family have any special recipes? Include one of the recipes in your journal and explain why it is special to your family.

Vocabulary: *shinnicked, schooner, auspicious, incandescent*

CHAPTER NINE

Comprehension Questions:

1. What is Aunt Maude's opinion of the soldiers lined up at the dock?
2. Aunt Maude says, "As the war keeps going on, I expect we'll come to believe that all Germans are monsters. It's easy to kill a monster now, isn't it? If we thought they were just like us, with wives and children and such—well, how would we shoot them?" How much truth is there in this statement?
3. Compare the description of Aunt Maude's house to the description of Aunt Maude herself.

Response Journal Topic:

What words would you use to describe Aunt Maude? Have you ever met anyone like her?

Vocabulary: *haversack, puttees, hassock*

CHAPTER TEN

Comprehension Questions:

1. What does Charlie pack for his trip? Do you think he's well prepared for the journey he's about to make?
2. How do you think that Charlie's parents will react then they get the letter saying that he's "gone to the ice"?

Response Journal Topic:

What advice would you give Charlie if you met him on the dock?

Vocabulary: *harbourmaster, makeshift*

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Comprehension Questions:

1. What does *auspicious* mean? The first person that Charlie meets on the dock is Clint, the bully. Is Charlie's trip off to an auspicious start?
2. How do Charlie and Clint trick each other?
3. Charlie talks out loud to himself as he tries to get out of the crate in the ship's hold. In your opinion, how does talking to himself help Charlie in this situation?

Response Journal Topic:

Describe a time you were in a scary situation and explain what you did to cope with it.

Vocabulary: *ruckus, stowaway, pistons*

CHAPTER TWELVE

Comprehension Questions:

1. (Teachers may want to talk about symbolism and imagery before beginning a discussion of this chapter.) What significance do the images in Charlie's dream have? Why does the image of the floating steel anchor especially disturb him?
2. What are some of the hardships that Charlie endures in the crate?
3. When the C.O. discovers that Charlie is fourteen years old, he says, "Well, you're as good a man now as you're ever likely to be." Is the C.O. kidding? Do you think that Charlie feels that he's all done growing up?
4. Once he's out of the crate, Charlie—still thinking he's on a sealing ship—imagines the preparations taking place above. In what ways do Charlie's ideas of sealing differ from his mother's description?
5. Who is most to blame for the situation that Charlie now finds himself in—Clint or Charlie himself? What were each person's motives for doing what they did? Do a person's motives change how you feel about their behaviour? Explain.

Response Journal Topic:

Write about a time when you were lost. How did you get lost? Did anything positive come out of being lost? How did you find your way out?

Vocabulary: *delirious, battalion, contempt, galley*

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Comprehension Questions:

1. Will Charlie's parents be relieved or upset to hear that Charlie is not sealing, but on a ship headed to Europe?
In what ways would sealing be like fighting in a war?
2. The author describes two characters this way: "as Martin was fair and a tall drink of water, Michael was dark and big. He had broad shoulders and hands like hammers." What do "tall drink of water" and "hands like hammers" mean? What pictures do they paint in your head?
3. Why do you think Charlie likes Martin so much? Martin is described as "a protector by nature and choice."
Who else has been especially kind to Charlie? How does Charlie feel about that person?
4. Martin claims that he is not afraid to fight in a war because he "is no sloucher." Do you think it's possible to be determined, brave, and afraid, all at the same time?
5. Martin shows Charlie the picture of his girl, Meeta. Why doesn't Charlie show Martin his picture of Mac?

Response Journal Topic:

Charlie has to write home with some very bad news. Describe a time when you had to deliver bad news yourself. How did you decide to do it? What were people's reactions to the news? Do you think that some ways of delivering bad news are better than others?

The letter that Charlie writes is very short and simple. Write a new letter, explaining more of the feelings that you think Charlie might be having right now.

Vocabulary: *floundering, kinship, mythical, rogue, anesthetic*

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Comprehension Questions:

1. Charlie is not given much help in getting home. In fact, he is told just to take care of himself until the money for his return fare arrives from Newfoundland. If this were to happen today, do you think that adults would have the same reaction?
2. Confused and scared, Charlie looks up into the sky and asks for help getting home. Immediately, he is interrupted by a nurse. Is the nurse the answer to his problems?
3. Why does Charlie decide to go to Etaples?

Response Journal Topic:

If you had to spend eight weeks in a foreign country all by yourself, what would you do? What country would you prefer to be stranded in? Why?

Vocabulary: *disembodied, restitution, brig, dominion*

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Comprehension Questions:

1. Charlie makes a quick decision to board a ship headed for France and devises a plan to hide on it. Do you think that this is evidence that Charlie is becoming more “street smart” with experience? What evidence have you read to indicate that Charlie is a clever person? In what ways has he not been clever?
2. The hospital city stretches for miles—so far, in fact, that Charlie has to walk for most of the afternoon to reach the Canadian section. What does this tell you about the war? How many people—including soldiers and hospital personnel—do you estimate are fighting in the war?
3. How does Charlie’s experience as a patient in the St. John’s hospital help him in the hospital city? Compare the hospitals to each other. Why does Charlie think of Nurse Butters when he meets the Matron-in-Chief?

Response Journal Topic:

Charlie lies a number of times in this chapter in order to get where he’s going. Explain whether or not you feel that lying is okay, under certain circumstances. Be specific in your examples.

Vocabulary: *derelict, featherweights, disembarking, ensign, laggards, reassuring*

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Comprehension Questions:

1. What do you notice about the way many of the doctors and nurses speak to Charlie? What reasons do you think they have for speaking to him this way?
2. Part of the reason that Charlie wants to work hard in the hospital is to prove that he’s not a coward. What other things has Charlie done to prove this? What types of things do you predict he’ll do in the future?
3. What does the word *discipline* mean? Why is discipline important for people working for the war effort?
4. Recount the details of the letter Charlie’s father sent, in your own words. Were you surprised that he does not seem angry in the letter? What emotions does Charlie feel when he reads it?
5. Where do you predict that Charlie will take Mac? Why?

Response Journal Topic:

Write about a situation in which you had to show discipline. Why was it important that you did so? Was it difficult? Guess what might have happened if you had not been disciplined.

Vocabulary: *mahogany, leastways, discipline, bureaucracy, hostel*

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Comprehension Questions:

1. Try to translate into English the conversation between the shopkeeper and the Ulsterman.
2. Look up the word *luxuries*. List some of the luxuries that people in the hospital city enjoy.
3. Mac says, “If you’re old enough to watch good men die, I guess you’re old enough to drink wine.” Do you agree or disagree? What makes a person more mature: age in years or experience?
4. Mac tells Charlie that she has no family left. How do you think that makes Charlie feel about his own family?

5. Has Charlie done enough to prove that he is not a coward? In your eyes? In his own eyes?
6. What does “those who don’t know their history are bound to repeat it” mean?

Response Journal Topic:

In the middle of the bombed-out building and hospital tents, Mac and Charlie find a nice spot to have a picnic. Have you ever had a similar experience? Explain what lesson a person could learn from Mac and Charlie’s picnic or your own experience.

Vocabulary: *corpulent, ricocheted, pristine, billets, ironic, reconnaissance, haunches*

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Comprehension Questions:

1. Name some of the things you’ve learned about wartime hospitals and battlefields from reading this book.
2. Why did the soldiers in World War One fight in trenches?
3. Charlie notices that families leaving the war zone have a look that is “worse than defeat.” What is worse than defeat, in your opinion? What does “coping had replaced hoping” mean?
4. Do you agree or disagree with Charlie’s decision to let Mac have his ticket home? Why?

Response Journal Topic:

Look up the word *dilemma* in the dictionary. Rewrite the definition in your own words. In this chapter, Charlie faces a dilemma: if he gives his ticket to Mac, he will not be able to go home, but Mac’s baby will be safe; if he uses the ticket himself, he will see his family again, but he will worry about Mac. Describe a time you faced a dilemma yourself. What did you decide to do?

Vocabulary: *casualties, stabilizing, shrapnel, languished, mackintosh*

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Comprehension Questions:

1. What does the smell of the trenches tell you about what it must have been like to live in them?
2. Charlie sees a dog on the battlefield and is told that the dog has been trained to carry messages from trench to trench. He also learns that the dog was once a family pet, given up to help the war effort. Do you think you’d be able to sacrifice something you loved, if it meant helping a great cause? What sort of cause do you think would be worth the sacrifice?
3. Trying to sleep in the “funk hole,” or shelf in the wall of the trench, Charlie fantasizes that he’s back home. Compare his memories of home to his present reality. Do you think that Charlie’s opinion of home has changed? Do you think that Charlie will ever dream of adventure again?

Response Journal Topic:

Imagine that you are a soldier fighting in one of the trenches of World War One. Write a letter home, describing your experience.

Vocabulary: *duckboards, sniper, embroidered*

CHAPTER TWENTY

Comprehension Questions:

1. Why do you think the author choose to describe the funk hole as “coffin-shaped”?
2. Why is Martin so angry when he sees Charlie?
3. What does “optimistic” mean? Are the soldiers optimistic about their chances in the battle? How might optimism help them win?

Response Journal Topic:

In order to be successful, the soldiers have to work together as a team. Write about a time when you were able to accomplish more as part of a team than you would have been able to do on your own.

Vocabulary: *relentless, pensive, parapet, bombardment, beleaguered, cursory, cakewalk, righteousness, clambered*

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Comprehension Questions:

1. Describe some of the sounds that Charlie hears in battle.
2. Which of his father's lessons does Charlie recall as he tries to help on the battlefield?
3. On page 190, Charlie is described as “looking into the face of the murderous Hun.” Go to that page and describe what the face really looks like. What message do you think the author is sending by including this detail?
4. How does Charlie's sealing gear help him on the battlefield?
5. List the many things that Charlie does to save Martin's life. Which do you think was the most important?
6. How many soldiers in the Newfoundland Regiment lost their lives in the Battle of the Somme?
7. Why didn't Charlie go home when he had the chance? Do you think he surprised himself with his bravery and ability to act?
8. There were many disturbing images in this chapter. Which, in your opinion, was the most upsetting to read?

Response Journal Topic:

Have you ever heard a family member recount experiences from the war? Have you read other books or seen movies about wartime? Compare those experiences to reading this book.

Do you think it's important to observe Remembrance Day? Explain why or why not.

Vocabulary: *refocused, grotesque, consciousness, dehydrated, dumbfounded, iodine, tourniquet, slaughter, lieutenant, carnage*

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

Comprehension Questions:

1. When Charlie's mother first sees him, she doesn't recognize him. In the author's words, he is "tall, grown, a man."
In what other ways do you think Charlie's time in Europe has changed him?
2. Why do you think the author wrote this book for young people?

Response Journal Topic:

Write about an experience that changed you in an important way.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

"Newfoundland and The Great War": http://collections.ic.gc.ca/great_war/home.html

Cruxton, J. Bradley, and W. Douglas Wilson. *Flashback Canada, 4th ed.* Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1999.

GRADE 5

Students should demonstrate ability in the following areas:

LANGUAGE

Writing:

- communicate ideas and information for a variety of purposes (e.g., to present and support a viewpoint)
- use writing for various purposes and in a range of contexts (e.g., to summarize information from materials they have read, to reflect on their thoughts, feelings, and imaginings)
- organize information to convey a central idea, using well-developed paragraphs that focus on a main idea and give some relevant supporting details
- use simple, compound, and complex sentences
- use and spell correctly the vocabulary appropriate for this grade level
- use correctly the conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.) specified for this grade level
- routinely introduce new words from their reading into their writing

Reading:

- read a variety of fiction and non-fiction materials for different purposes
- read independently, selecting appropriate reading strategies
- explain their interpretation of a written work, supporting it with evidence from the work and from their own knowledge and experience
- describe a series of events in a written work, using evidence from the work
- describe how various elements in a story function (e.g., plot, characters, setting)
- make judgements and draw conclusions about the content in written materials, using evidence from the materials
- begin to identify a writer's or character's point of view

- use a dictionary and a thesaurus to expand their vocabulary
- begin to make inferences while reading

Oral Communication:

- communicate information, explain a variety of ideas and procedures, and follow the teacher's instructions
- ask and answer questions on a variety of topics to acquire and clarify information
- communicate a main idea about a topic and describe a sequence of events
- express and respond to ideas and opinions concisely, clearly, and appropriately
- contribute and work constructively in groups
- demonstrate the ability to concentrate by identifying main points and staying on topic
- analyze media works
- use the conventions of oral language that are appropriate to the grade
- use tone of voice, gestures, and other non-verbal cues to help clarify meaning

SOCIAL STUDIES

- locate relevant information from a variety of sources (e.g., maps, print materials)
- construct and read a wide variety of graphs, charts, diagrams, maps, and models for specific purposes

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- formulate questions about and identify the physical needs of humans, and explore possible answers to these questions and ways of meeting these needs
- formulate questions about and identify needs and problems related to structures and mechanisms in the outdoor environment, and explore possible answers and solutions

GRADE 6

LANGUAGE

Writing:

- communicate ideas and information for a variety of purposes (to inform, to persuade, to explain)
- use writing for various purposes and in a range of contexts
- organize information, using well-linked paragraphs
- use a variety of sentence types, appropriate for their purposes
- use and spell correctly the vocabulary appropriate for this grade level
- use correctly the conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.) specified for this grade level
- select words and expressions to create specific effects

Reading:

- read a variety of fiction and non-fiction materials
- read independently, selecting appropriate reading strategies
- explain their interpretation of a written work, supporting it with evidence from the work and from their own knowledge and experience
- understand the vocabulary and language structures appropriate for this grade level
- identify the elements of a story and explain how they relate to each other
- make predictions while reading a story or novel, using various clues
- make judgements and draw conclusions about ideas in written materials on the basis of evidence
- use their knowledge of the elements of grammar and the structure of words and sentences to understand what they read
- consult a dictionary to confirm pronunciation and/or find the meaning of unfamiliar words
- understand specialized words or terms, as necessary

Oral Communication:

- ask and answer questions to obtain and clarify information
- communicate a main idea about a topic and describe a sequence of events
- express and respond to a range of ideas and opinions concisely, clearly, and appropriately
- contribute and work constructively in groups
- demonstrate the ability to concentrate by identifying main points and staying on topic
- analyze media works
- use the conventions of oral language that are appropriate to the grade
- use a varied vocabulary and a range of sentence structures to add interest to their remarks
- speak correctly, observing common grammatical rules such as subject–verb agreement
- recognize and interpret figurative language in the speech of others and use it to add interest to their own remarks
- use tone of voice and gestures to enhance the message and help convince or persuade listeners in conversations, discussions, or presentations

SOCIAL STUDIES

Heritage and Citizenship:

- construct and read a variety of graphs, charts, diagrams, maps, and models for specific purposes
- describe the challenges of present-day explorers and compare them to the challenges of early explorers

Canada and World Connections:

- identify outstanding contributions of Canadians from various backgrounds to the global community
- identify countries to which Canada has contributed assistance

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Structures and Mechanisms:

- formulate questions about and identify needs and problems related to structures and mechanisms in the environment, and explore possible answers and solutions

GRADE 7

LANGUAGE

Writing:

- communicate ideas and information for a variety of purposes (to outline an argument, to report on observations)
- use writing for various purposes and in a range of contexts
- organize information to develop a central idea, using well-linked and well-developed paragraphs
- use a variety of sentence types and sentence structures, and use sentences of varying length
- use and spell correctly the vocabulary appropriate for this grade level
- use correctly the conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.) specified for this grade level
- give evidence of an expanding vocabulary in their writing
- show a growing awareness of the expressiveness of words in their word choice

Reading:

- read a variety of fiction and non-fiction materials
- read independently, selecting appropriate reading strategies
- explain their interpretation of a written work, supporting it with evidence from the work and from their own knowledge and experience
- understand the vocabulary and language structures appropriate for this grade level
- explain how various elements in a story function in relation to each other
- make judgements and draw conclusions about ideas in written materials on the basis of evidence
- clarify and develop their own points of view by examining the ideas of others
- identify some stylistic devices in literary works and explain their use (e.g., foreshadowing, personification, simile)
- use their knowledge of the elements of grammar and the structure of words and sentences to understand what they read
- use a variety of strategies to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words

Oral Communication:

- ask questions and discuss different aspects of ideas in order to clarify their meaning
- listen to and communicate related ideas, and narrate real and fictional events in a sequence
- express and respond to a range of ideas and opinions concisely, clearly, and appropriately
- contribute and work constructively in groups
- demonstrate the ability to concentrate by identifying main points and staying on topic
- analyze and interpret media works
- use the conventions of oral language that are appropriate to this grade
- regularly incorporate new vocabulary into discussions
- use words and phrases to signal that a new or important point is about to be made
- use analogies and comparisons to develop and clarify ideas
- listen and respond constructively to alternative ideas or viewpoints
- analyze factors that contribute to the success, or lack of success, of a discussion

HISTORY

- demonstrate an understanding of life in English Canada
- analyze, synthesize, and evaluate historical information
- analyze and describe conflicting points of view about a series of historical events
- demonstrate an understanding of the nature of change and conflict, methods of creating change, and methods of resolving conflicts

GEOGRAPHY

- produce maps for a variety of purposes
- communicate an understanding that various individuals and groups have different opinions on environmental issues

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Structures and Mechanisms:

- recognize that a solution to a problem may result in creating new problems in other areas and that a solution to a problem may be found while one is working on solving a problem in another area.

GRADE 8

LANGUAGE

Writing:

- communicate ideas and information for a variety of purposes (to evaluate information, to compare points of view)
- use writing for various purposes and in a range of contexts
- organize information and ideas creatively as well as logically, using paragraph structures appropriate for their purpose
- use a wide variety of sentence types and sentence structures, with conscious attention to style
- use and spell correctly the vocabulary appropriate for this grade level
- use correctly the conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.) specified for this grade level

Reading:

- read a variety of fiction and non-fiction materials
- read independently, selecting appropriate reading strategies
- explain their interpretation of a written work, supporting it with evidence from the work and from their own knowledge and experience
- understand the vocabulary and language structures appropriate for this grade level
- explain how the various elements in a story function in relation to each other
- make judgements and draw conclusions about ideas in written materials on the basis of evidence
- clarify and broaden their own points of view by examining the ideas of others
- identify some stylistic devices used in literary works (e.g., metaphor, simile, personification) and explain their use
- use a variety of strategies to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words

Oral Communication:

- provide clear answers to questions and well-constructed explanations or instructions in classroom work
- listen attentively to organize and classify information and to clarify thinking
- listen to and communicate connected ideas and relate carefully-constructed narratives about real and fictional events
- express and respond to a range of ideas and opinions concisely, clearly, and appropriately
- contribute and work constructively in groups
- demonstrate the ability to concentrate by identifying main points and staying on topic
- analyze and interpret media works
- use the conventions of oral language that are appropriate to this grade
- use tone of voice and body language to clarify meaning during conversations and presentations
- adjust their delivery to suit the size of different groups
- contribute collaboratively in group situations by asking questions and building on the ideas of others

HISTORY

Heritage and Citizenship:

- demonstrate an understanding of the factors that contributed to Canada's Confederation
- analyze and describe current issues and their potential impact on Confederation today
- demonstrate an understanding of the diverse groups and individuals who contributed to the formation and growth of Canada
- identify the colonies that joined Confederation and their dates of entry
- analyze, synthesize, and evaluate historical information
- analyze and describe conflicting points of view about an historical issue
- analyze and describe the conflicts and changes involving Canadians from Confederation to 1918
- demonstrate an understanding of the impact of World War One on Canada and the world community
- demonstrate an understanding of Canada's participation in World War One
- demonstrate an understanding of the impact of the war on the veterans, their families, Canada as a whole, specific groups within the country, and the world

GEOGRAPHY

- produce a variety of maps for specific purposes
- identify and describe the characteristics common to places of high population density and the characteristics common to places of low population density
- demonstrate an understanding of how economic resources influence the economic success of a region
- identify factors that influence people to move to another place

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Energy and Control:

- identify ways in which the characteristics of mirrors and convex and concave lenses determine their use in optical instruments
- explain the function and purpose of combinations of multiple lenses or lenses and mirrors in optical systems

Structures and Mechanisms:

- identify ways in which the characteristics of mirrors and convex and concave lenses determine their use in optical instruments
- explain the function and purpose of combinations of multiple lenses or lenses and mirrors in optical systems

WEB RESOURCES

Supplementary information can be found online at the following websites.

For general information on World War One:

www.firstworldwar.com/battles/somme.htm

For information on Canada's role in World War One:

www.archives.ca/05/0518_e.html

http://collections.ic.gc.ca/great_war/gallery/regiment/embarking/enlarge/e4134.html

For information on related topics, such as the history of sealing in Newfoundland:

www.educ.mun.ca/e4142f00/mdymond/page2.html

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 1: DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Choose one of the following design challenges:

1. Design a tool that would be useful in a field hospital. Draw a diagram of the tool, labelling each of its parts. List the materials that would be required to manufacture the tool. Write a paragraph or two explaining why the tool would be useful.
2. Design a field pack for soldiers that would meet their needs on the battlefield, keeping in mind the conditions there. How heavy will your pack be? Will it withstand all weather conditions? Is it easy to access under battle conditions? Draw a diagram, labelling each part of the pack. List its contents and write a paragraph or two to explain the benefits of using this field pack.

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 2: MAPPING SKILLS

1. Looking back through the novel, list the places that Charlie visits and the mode of transportation he uses to travel to each place.
2. On a map that includes Eastern Canada, the Atlantic Ocean, and Europe, label the cities and towns that Charlie travels to in the novel.
3. On the map, use lines to mark the routes that Charlie travelled. Colour each line differently, depending on the mode of transportation he used to get there.
4. Add a legend to the map to indicate which colour corresponds to which mode of transportation.

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 3: POSTER

Design a recruitment poster for one of these occupations:

Sealer

Red Cross volunteer

Steps:

1. Look back to the novel for details about your chosen profession. Write down as many details as you can find or remember.
2. Sort the details into positive and negative categories. How can you make the negative qualities look more appealing in order to convince people to join that profession?
3. Design an attractive and convincing poster. Remember: the goal is to inspire people to join that profession.

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 4: BOOK REVIEW

Write a review of the novel, expressing your own opinions.

Steps:

1. Write a short summary (no more than one paragraph) of the novel in your own words. Include only the most important details, and make sure you don't give away the ending.
2. Write a review of the book: What did you think of it? What were its strengths? What were its weaknesses? Would you recommend it to others? Whenever possible, use examples from the book to support your opinions.
3. Give the book a rating from one to ten.
4. Draw a picture to illustrate one of the book's important scenes.